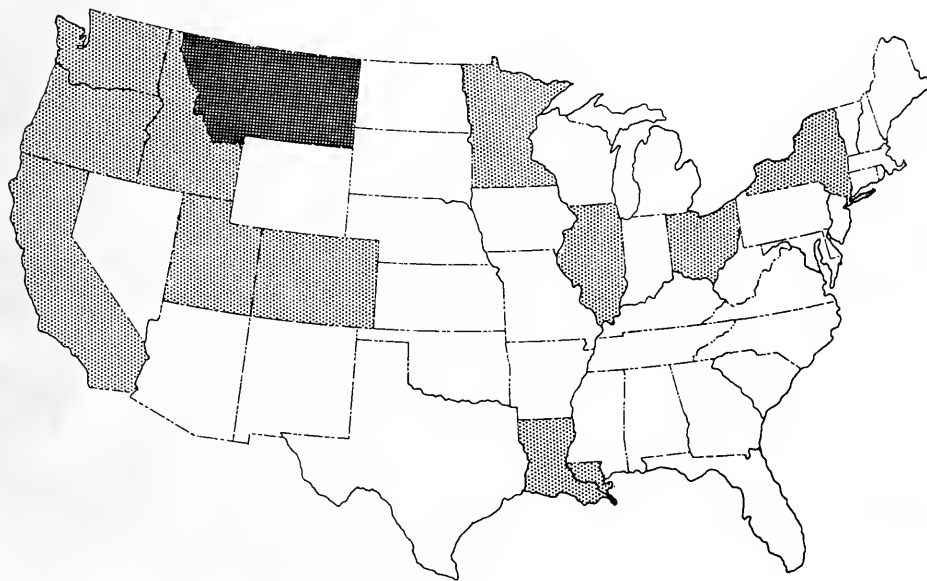


HIGHWAY-USER TAX SCHEDULES
RECOMMENDED IN OTHER STATE
HIGHWAY FINANCE STUDIES
COMPARED WITH
MONTANA



A REPORT TO THE MONTANA
FACT FINDING COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAYS
BY
WM. L. HALL

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HIGHWAY-USER TAX SCHEDULES RECOMMENDED
IN STATE HIGHWAY FINANCE STUDIES

(Text in capital letters are comments by Wm. L. Hall, regarding Montana studies. Text in lower case letters are direct quotes from a paper by G. P. St. Clair and Hugo Duzan appearing in Public Roads magazine of October, 1956)

UPON THE COMPLETION OF THE HIGHWAY COST ALLOCATION WORK, THE MONTANA FACT FINDING COMMITTEE WAS CONCERNED THAT THE USER RATES ESTABLISHED MIGHT BE TOO HIGH OR TOO LOW IN RELATION TO SIMILAR STUDIES THAT HAD BEEN DONE IN RECENT YEARS IN OTHER STATES. THERE IS, OF COURSE, NO REASON THAT MONTANA'S ALLOCATION MUST FOLLOW PRECISELY THAT OF OTHER STATES. MONTANA'S COSTS ARE PECULIAR TO THE TOPOGRAPHY AND LIMITED HIGHWAY USAGE FOUND IN THIS STATE, AND COSTS MUST BE PAID IF WE ARE TO HAVE THE HIGHWAYS. NEVERTHELESS THERE IS SOME COMPULSION TO MAKE COMPARISONS TO BE SURE THAT GENERAL TRENDS ARE FOLLOWED AND REASONABLENESS IS ASSURED. IT SEEMED THERE WAS INSUFFICIENT TIME AVAILABLE TO MAKE A COMPARATIVE STUDY WITH FINDINGS IN OTHER STATES UNTIL A WINDFALL OCCURRED IN THE FORM OF A RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLE WHICH PROVIDED JUST SUCH A COMPARISON FOR 9 STATES. (HIGHWAY USER TAX SCHEDULES RECOMMENDED IN STATE HIGHWAYS FINANCE STUDIES, PUBLIC ROADS, OCTOBER, 1956 REPORTED BY G. P. ST. CLAIR AND HUGO DUZAN.)

THIS COMPARISON PROVIDED ALL THE DATA NECESSARY TO PERMIT A COMPARABLE ANALYSIS OF MONTANA'S PROPOSED TAX STRUCTURE WITH THE 9 INDIVIDUAL STATE'S AND WITH MEDIAN FIGURES FOR THE SAME GROUP. SUCH A COMPARISON HAS BEEN MADE AND IS PROVIDED HEREIN. THE TEXT OF THE

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ST. CLAIR - DUZAN ARTICLE IS QUOTED LIBERALLY AND MANY OF THE TABLES AND CHARTS HAVE BEEN USED AS THEY APPEARED IN THE ARTICLE EXCEPT FOR THE ADDITION OF MONTANA. MONTANA'S PROPOSED AND EXISTING RATE STRUCTURE HAS BEEN EVALUATED ON THE BASIS OF THE VEHICLE CHARACTERISTICS USED IN THE COMPARATIVE STUDY AND AS SHOWN ON TABLE 1. MONTANA'S DATA HAS NOT BEEN USED IN ARRIVING AT A NEW MEDIAN ALTHOUGH THE EFFECT OF SUCH INCLUSION WAS EXPLORED. THE DIFFERENCE IN MEDIAN VALUES WOULD HAVE BEEN MINOR IN ALL INSTANCES.

THE ST. CLAIR - DUZAN FINDINGS FOR THE 9 STATES (11 STATES IN THE CASE OF EXISTING TAX STRUCTURE) IS QUOTED BELOW WITH APPROPRIATE INSERTS AND COMMENTS EVALUATING THE POSITION OF MONTANA IN THE DATA.

"The findings of highway tax studies made by State personnel or consultants in individual States throw some light on the vexatious question of the relative tax responsibility of vehicles of different sizes and weights. Although studies have been made in numerous States, in only nine of them were the findings expressed in terms such that a comparative analysis could readily be made. These States are California, Colorado, Illinois, Louisiana, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Utah, and Washington. The tables and charts which follow deal with the study findings in those nine States and with comparative data on actual payments under existing user-tax laws.

VEHICLES SELECTED FOR COMPARISON

"In order to run the gamut of motor-vehicle sizes and weights, eight typical vehicles or vehicle combinations shown in silhouette

below were selected. These vehicles and their assumed operating conditions are briefly described in table 1.

"The maximum gross weights chosen are typical of the weights for which vehicles and combinations of these several types would be registered. Annual mileages also are reasonably close to average. For purposes of State-to-State comparison it is assumed that a vehicle travels its entire mileage in the particular State. It is recognized that over-the-road trucking combinations may divide their actual travel among several States, and also that such vehicles may have much greater total mileages than those used in the comparison. The values chosen, although not averages of those used in the studies, are considered moderate and fair. For uniformity of comparison all of the vehicles were taken as gasoline-powered.

"In calculating required tax payments for the eight selected vehicles from the schedules recommended by the investigators, the effort was made to render an accurate interpretation of the findings of the tax studies in each of the nine States. Values were calculated by two methods. First, the required tax payments for each vehicle were computed on the basis of the values of vehicle weight, annual mileage, and miles per gallon used in each State Study." THESE CALCULATIONS ARE NOT SHOWN IN THIS ARTICLE. THERE IS CONSIDERABLE VARIATION IN VALUES DEVELOPED FROM STATE TO STATE AND UNIFORMITY IS DESIRABLE FOR THIS COMPARISON. "The second method, which affords direct State-to-State comparisons, utilizes the values of maximum gross weight, annual travel, and miles per gallon given in table 1.

It is believed that the resulting comparisons are accurate and fair; but it is not unlikely that minor differences in interpretation would occur in similar calculations made by others.

"It was desired to present a comparison of the tax-study findings in these nine States with the taxes that would have been paid by the same vehicles under the user-tax rates prevailing in 1955. For this comparison two more States were added to the list; Oregon, which has a tax structure based on the findings of incremental studies; and Idaho, which has a mileage tax similar in coverage to those in Colorado, New York, Ohio, and Oregon." RATES FOR 1956 IN MONTANA HAVE BEEN USED BECAUSE OF THE INCREASE IN GROSS VEHICLE WEIGHT FEES EFFECTIVE THIS YEAR.

"In each of the tables and charts presented the user-tax payments shown for a given vehicle were obtained by adding (1) the registration fee or weight tax that the vehicle would pay under the tax-study recommendations (or existing law); (2) the gasoline tax that would be paid under the assumed annual mileage and miles per gallon; and (3) the amount of third-structure tax (such as the New York weight-distance tax or the Ohio axle-mile tax) that would be required. Values are expressed in three ways as follows; (1) Tax payment per year, (2) tax payment per mile of travel, and (3) tax payment per gross ton-mile (obtained by dividing the tax payment by the product of maximum gross weight and annual mileage). The latter is a rather controversial figure, as there is no general agreement that gross ton-miles are a true measure of tax responsibility. Values are also expressed in the form of indexes, the index value for the passenger car being 1.00 in

TABLE 1. - Characteristics of vehicles selected for this study comparison

Vehicle number	General description	Empty weight	Payload capacity weight		Annual travel		Ton-miles at maximum gross weight		Fuel consumption rate ^{1/2}
			Empty	Index	Feet	Index	Ton-miles	Index	
1	Passenger car	2,400	2/4,000	1.00	7,000	1.00	16,000	1.00	Miles/gal.
2	Pickup truck	4,000	4,000	1.66	10,000	1.42	19,000	1.19	15.7
3	3 axle, refuse truck	7,600	10,000	1.32	10,000	1.00	25,000	1.56	7.0
4	Bus	10,500	20,000	1.90	50,000	7.14	67,000	4.19	5.3
5	4 axle tractor-semitrailer	15,215	40,000	2.63	40,000	4.00	70,000	4.38	4.3
6	4 axle tractor-semitrailer	19,050	50,000	3.33	40,000	4.00	100,000	6.25	4.2
7	5 axle truck trailer	25,000	60,000	2.50	17,000	1.70	1,000,000	62.50	3.5
8	5 axle tractor-semitrailer	27,000	70,000	2.94	40,000	4.00	1,000,000	62.50	3.6

1. All vehicles were gasoline-powered.
2. Six passengers at 150 pounds each assumed.

Table 2. - Dollar road-user tax payments for selected vehicles (all states except Montana)

Basis for payment	No. 1: Passenger car	Single-unit trucks			Truck combinations			
		No. 2: Pickup	No. 3: 2 axle, 6-wheeler	No. 4: Bus	Tractor-semitrailer		No. 7: Truck-trailer	No. 8: Tractor-semi-trailer
					No. 5: 3-axle	No. 6: 4-axle		
Payments per year:								
Median payments-----dollars--	40	46	207	1,009	965	1,229	1,710	1,830
Index-----	1.00	1.15	5.18	25.23	24.13	30.73	42.75	45.95
Payments per mile:								
Median payments-----cents--	0.44	0.575	2.070	2.018	2.500	3.073	4.419	4.472
Index-----	1.00	1.30	4.71	4.59	5.71	7.03	10.05	10.16
Payments per ton-mile:								
Median payments-----cents--	0.222	0.240	0.218	0.147	0.121	0.121	0.100	0.102
Index-----	1.00	1.08	0.98	0.67	0.57	0.55	0.45	0.46

Part 2. - Total User-Tax Payments at 1955 rates in 11 States^{1/2}

Payments per year:								
Median payments-----dollars--	41	48	192	996	901	1,223	1,860	2,014
Index-----	1.00	1.17	4.66	24.12	21.63	29.76	45.17	49.00
Payments per mile:								
Median payments-----cents--	0.441	0.560	1.800	1.732	2.317	2.850	3.720	3.826
Index-----	1.00	1.36	4.13	3.93	5.25	6.42	8.44	8.68
Payments per ton-mile:								
Median payments-----cents--	0.227	0.250	0.192	0.120	0.116	0.117	0.103	0.103
Index-----	1.00	1.10	0.85	0.56	0.51	0.50	0.46	0.46

Part 3. - Total User-Tax Payments under Tax Study recommendations in Montana

Payments per year:								
Median payments-----dollars--	49	52	160	795	914	1,577	2,660	2,939
Index-----	1.20	1.06	3.77	16.92	19.65	32.19	64.29	70.76
Payments per mile:								
Median payments-----cents--	0.527	0.547	1.977	1.910	2.606	3.062	5.320	5.679
Index-----	1.00	1.03	3.71	3.62	4.87	5.68	10.09	10.77
Payments per ton-mile:								
Median payments-----cents--	0.272	0.270	0.160	0.118	0.120	0.120	0.157	0.158
Index-----	1.00	0.99	0.59	0.53	0.44	0.45	0.51	0.50

Part 4. - Total User-Tax Payments at 1966 rates in Montana

Payments per year:								
Median payments-----dollars--	49	52	160	795	914	1,577	2,660	2,939
Index-----	1.00	1.06	3.76	16.92	19.65	32.19	64.29	70.76
Payments per mile:								
Median payments-----cents--	0.527	0.547	1.977	1.910	2.606	3.062	5.320	5.679
Index-----	1.00	1.03	3.71	3.62	4.87	5.68	10.09	10.77
Payments per ton-mile:								
Median payments-----cents--	0.272	0.270	0.160	0.118	0.120	0.120	0.157	0.158
Index-----	1.00	0.99	0.59	0.53	0.44	0.45	0.51	0.50

^{1/2} The 9 States included in part 1 plus Oregon, which has a tax structure based on the findings of Incremental Costs, and Illinois, which has a mileage tax similar in coverage to those in Colorado, New York, Ohio, and Oregon.

all cases." BECAUSE OF THE RELATIVELY HIGH PASSENGER CAR CHARGES IN MONTANA (A RESULT OF HIGHER FUEL TAX PAYMENTS) THE COMPARISON BY INDICES IS SOMEWHAT MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN DOLLAR VALUES.

"Since vehicles do not travel fully loaded all of the time, average operating gross weights might well have been used instead of maximum gross weights to compute the tax payments per ton-mile. Average operating weights, however, are affected by the type of operation and those for vehicles of a given maximum gross weight may vary widely. Maximum gross vehicle weight, which is the registration basis in the majority of States and represents the potential of the vehicle, was therefore chosen.

MEDIAN VALUES OF TAX-STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

"The first question to be asked about these State tax-study findings is, "What is the Trend?" As arithmetic averages are likely to be deceptive in such a case, it was decided to compare the median ^{1/} values, from among the findings in these nine States, of the user-tax payments required of each of the eight selected vehicles. These values, which are given in the upper section (part 1) of table 2 and shown graphically in figure 1, are indicative of the middle ground of tax-study findings.

"Running quickly over the top line of table 2, we find the

^{1/} The median is the middle value of a series arranged in order of magnitude; for example, in the series of numbers, 27, 36, 40, 51, 63, the median is 40. In the case of an even numbered series the average of the two middle values is taken.

FIGURE 1

MEDIAN USER TAX PAYMENTS UNDER TAX STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS IN 9 STATES COMPARED WITH MONTANA

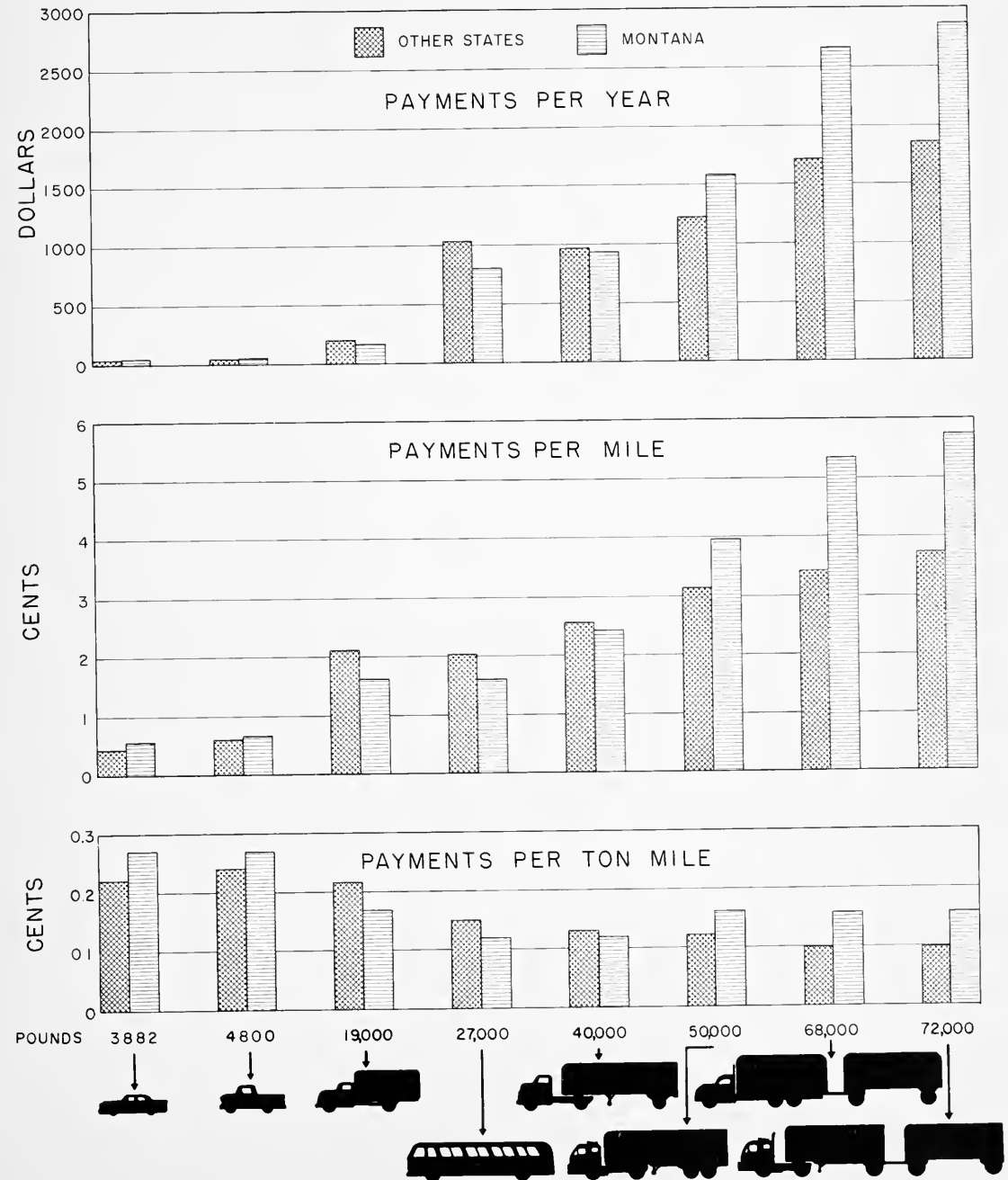
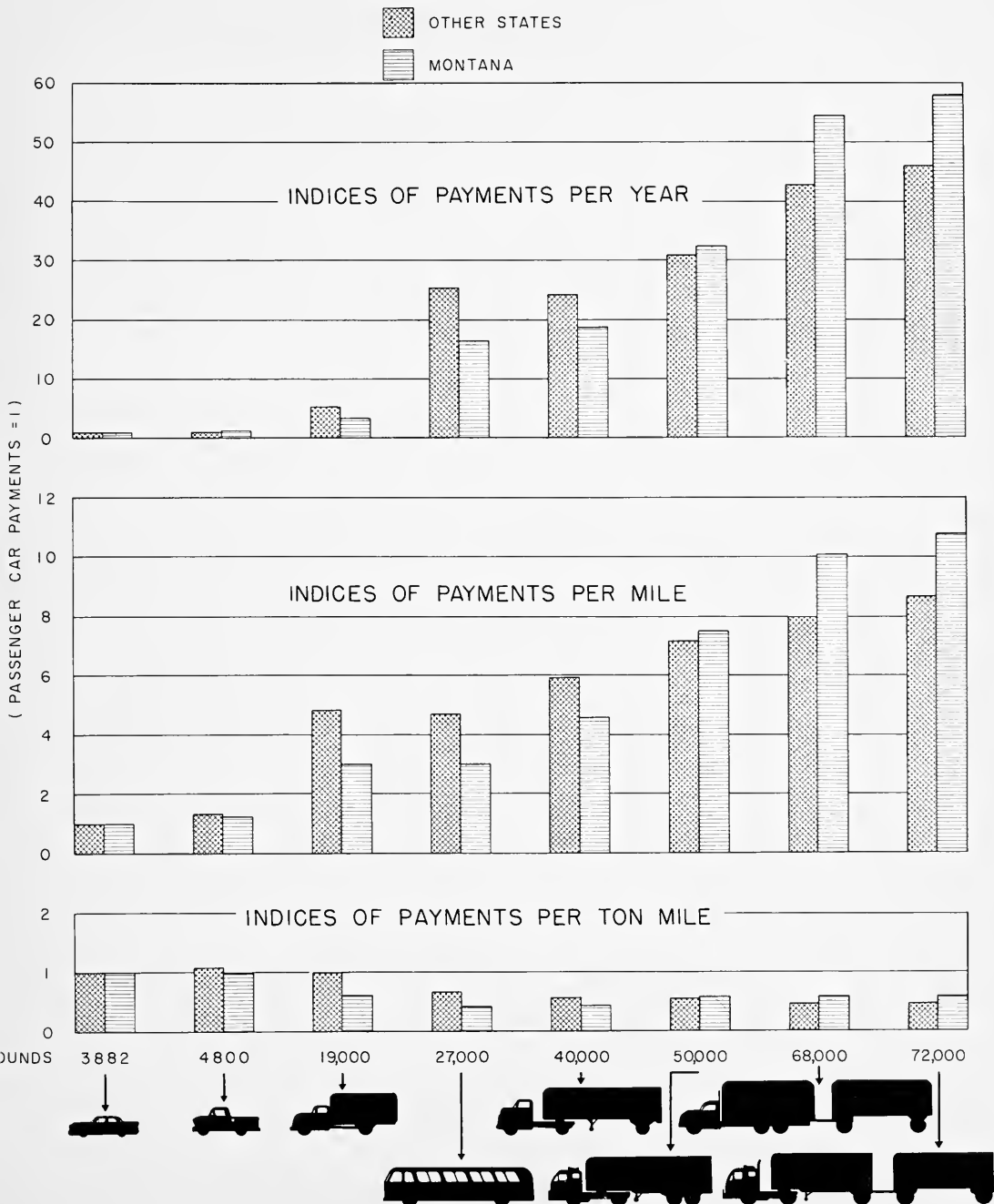


FIGURE 1-A
 INDICES UNDER TAX STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS
 IN 9 STATES COMPARED WITH MONTANA



middle values of tax-study findings ranging from \$40 per year for the passenger car to \$207 per year for the 2-axle, 6-tire truck; \$1,009 for the bus; \$1,229 for the 4-axle, 50,000-pound tractor-semitrailer; and \$1,836 for the 5-axle, 72,000-pound tractor-semitrailer-trailer combination. Expressed in terms of index values the range is from 1.00 for the passenger car to 45.90 for the biggest combination." COMPARISON OF THESE MEDIAN FIGURES WITH PROPOSED MONTANA SCHEDULES AND 1956 MONTANA RATES, BOTH BASED ON ASSUMPTIONS IN TABLE 1 ARE PROVIDED IN PARTS 3 AND 4 OF TABLE 2.

"Expression of the tax-study findings in terms of required tax payment per mile of travel eliminates the effect of the greater mileages traveled by the heavier vehicles, and thus narrows the range of variation. The median values of recommended tax payments per mile are found to vary from 0.43 cents in the case of the passenger car to 3.67 cents for the biggest combination. In terms of index values the range is from 1.00 to 8.54." COMPARABLE FIGURES FOR MONTANA STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS RANGE FROM 0.53 CENTS PER MILE FOR PASSENGER CARS TO 5.68 CENTS FOR THE BIGGEST COMBINATION INCLUDED. IN TERMS OF INDEX THE VALUES RANGE FROM 1 TO 10.78.

"By the expression of the tax-study findings in terms of recommended tax payments per gross ton-mile, the trend-line is caused to decrease rather than increase with weight of vehicle. Although a number of the tax studies in these nine States were based on the gross ton-mile theory, which holds that user taxes should be paid in

proportion to the product of weight and distance traveled, there was a tendency for the investigators to mitigate their theoretical findings somewhat when faced with the task of devising and recommending an actual schedule of taxation." A TON MILE ALLOCATION OF COSTS WAS MADE IN MONTANA BUT THE INCREMENTAL ALLOCATION WAS ACTUALLY USED IN DEVISING SUGGESTED TAX RATES. THE RATES SO DEVISED ARE SOMEWHAT LOWER FOR ALL VEHICLES EXCEPT PASSENGER CARS AND THE SMALLEST TRUCKS THAN THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN UNDER TON-MILE ALLOCATIONS.

"The downward trend in payments per ton-mile under tax-study recommendations is shown very plainly in the bottom panel of figure 1. If the gross ton-mile concept were fully accepted this trend would be horizontal.

MEDIAN USER-TAX PAYMENTS AT 1955 RATES

" The lower portion of (Part Two) table 2 gives the median values, for the same nine States plus Idaho and Oregon, of the user-tax-payments required of the eight selected vehicles under the tax schedules prevailing in 1955. The actual values are shown graphically in figure 2." COMPARABLE MONTANA RATES ARE SHOWN IN PART 4 OF THE SAME TABLE.

"The median values of actual required tax payments show similar trends to those of the tax-study recommendations, the values being higher in some cases and lower in others. Although the existing tax schedules in most of the nine tax-study States impose lower requirements on the heavy truck combinations than those recommended, the median values fail to reflect this tendency. This is largely due to

Table 4. - Total motor-tax payments per year (in dollars) for selected vehicles under tax-study recommendations

State	Year tax study pub- lished	No. 1: Pass- enger car	Single-unit trucks				Truck combinations								No. 8: Tractor- semitrailer- trailer			
			No. 2: Pickup		No. 3: 2-axle, 6-tire		No. 4: Bus		Tractor-semitrailer				No. 7: Truck- trailer					
									No. 5: 3-axle		No. 6: 4-axle							
			Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index		
California-----	1965	T	35	1,00	29	1,10	130	5,10	0,00	0,5	35,40	1,135	45,40	1,670	66,80	1,177	73,00	
Colorado-----	1960	T	35	1,00	51	2,1	292	5,11	1,769	11,80	3,604	44,15	1,112	56,15	10,120	5,192	6,400	
Colorado-----	1960	T	52	1,00	49	1,8	255	4,62	1,965	12,00	2,265	41,56	2,520	56,17	4,961	11,119	1,798	6,400
Illinois-----	196	T	40	1,00	51	1,9	284	4,60	975	26,30	1,14	27,00	1,761	31,93	1,677	8,400	1,500	37,50
Louisiana-----	1955	IC	46	1,00	46	1,00	320	4,70	1,309	21,13	736	26,89	3,217	36,46	1,809	6,452	(4)	----
Minnesota-----	1964	T	52	1,00	47	1,00	297	1,29	2,861	12,57	1,236	24,73	3,526	(4)	----	(4)	----	
New York-----	1950	T	47	1,00	65	1,8	267	6,11	1,255	26,70	1,560	32,77	2,459	55,15	(4)	----	(4)	----
New York-----	1960	T	22	1,00	26	1,15	106	4,42	569	36,25	610	29,71	1,010	45,03	(4)	----	(4)	----
Ohio-----	1951	S	30	1,00	50	1,1	163	4,45	1,207	29,13	1,006	26,74	1,351	38,55	1,551	4,665	2,310	66,79
Ohio-----	1953	I	49	1,00	30	1,07	200	5,43	1,119	35,62	996	25,54	1,153	36,60	2,427	5,111	56,31	-----
Utah-----	1960	T	13	1,00	30	1,09	153	4,42	(7)	-----	836	25,31	1,156	45,03	1,739	32,70	1,825	55,30
Washington-----	1960	T	40	1,00	36	1,00	177	4,44	902	26,55	720	19,79	1,061	26,53	1,876	6,605	1,706	46,15
Montana-----	1956	I	49	1,00	52	1,06	160	3,27	795	16,22	94	16,65	1,577	34,10	2,660	56,29	2,139	57,46

1 Method used to allocate tax responsibility indicated thus: I Incremental; IC (recommendations based on findings of incremental and cost-function solutions); S Standard cost; T full mile.

2 Motor-fuel tax rate of 6.5 cents per gallon and low registration fees.

3 Motor-fuel tax rate of 6.5 cents per gallon and high registration fees.

4 Vehicle combination not permitted by State size and weight regulations.

5 Maximum expenditure program with motor-fuel level of 4 cents per gallon.

6 Continuation of "Current" (1963) expenditure level with motor-fuel tax rate of 3 cents per gallon.

7 No recommendation.

8 Figures in these lines not used in arriving at median values for Table 2.

Table 5. - Total motor-tax payments per mile (in cents) for selected vehicles under tax-study recommendations

State	Year tax study pub- lished	No. 1: Passen- ger car	Single-unit trucks						Truck combinations										No. 8: Tractor- semitrailer- trailer	
			No. 2: Pickup		No. 3: 2-axle, 6-tire		No. 4: Bus		Tractor-semitrailer				No. 7: Truck- trailer							
									No. 5: 3-axle		No. 6: 4-axle									
			Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index		
California -----	1964	T	0,269	1,00	0,093	1,15	1,200	4,76	1,760	6,47	2,329	8,66	2,638	10,55	3,364	12,63	1,694	13,79		
Colorado -----	1950	T	0,51	1,20	0,48	1,00	2,020	4,94	1,690	5,32	8,376	10,79	7,760	13,16	10,232	19,35	10,796	11,25		
Illinois -----	1950	T	0,59	1,00	0,11	1,10	2,20	5,04	1,130	5,96	5,761	10,79	7,303	11,06	9,682	17,42	10,196	10,26		
Louisiana -----	1960	T	0,49	1,00	0,60	1,40	2,660	6,14	1,964	5,62	1,055	7,10	3,103	7,22	2,958	6,80	1,000	6,40		
Minnosota -----	1955	IC	0,75	1,00	0,75	1,16	2,300	4,64	2,010	4,00	2,650	4,97	3,063	6,15	3,360	6,79	(4)	-----		
New York -----	1964	T	0,59	1,00	0,80	1,05	2,070	3,70	4,126	7,30	3,227	5,01	4,593	11,20	(4)	-----	(4)	-----		
Ohio -----	1950	T	0,50	1,00	0,13	1,61	2,470	5,09	2,110	4,77	4,053	6,01	6,490	11,06	(4)	-----	(4)	-----		
Washington -----	1960	T	0,27	1,00	0,325	1,17	1,060	4,47	1,090	4,63	1,605	6,77	2,525	10,65	(4)	-----	(4)	-----		
Montana -----	1951	S	0,09	1,00	0,25	1,77	1,690	4,13	2,216	5,61	2,674	6,94	3,379	8,26	3,302	11,07	6,620	11,10		
Utah -----	1951	I	0,19	1,00	0,75	1,13	2,000	4,96	2,773	6,63	2,621	6,26	2,993	6,07	4,664	11,11	6,286	10,11		
Virginia -----	1960	T	0,35	1,00	0,59	1,27	1,560	4,48	(7)	-----	2,230	6,20	2,890	8,14	1,475	9,0	4,650	11,2		
Washington -----	1960	T	0,40	1,00	0,50	1,05	1,720	4,12	1,964	4,57	2,079	4,1	2,653	6,17	3,406	11,72	1,532	11,21		
Montana -----	1956	I	0,57	1,00	0,649	1,23	1,577	3,03	1,591	3,02	2,406	4,57	3,062	7,46	5,320	10,09	5,679	10,50		

1 Method used to allocate tax responsibility indicated thus: I Incremental; IC (recommendations based on findings of incremental and cost-function solutions); S Standard cost; T full mile.

2 Motor-fuel tax rate of 6.5 cents per gallon and low registration fees.

3 Motor-fuel tax rate of 6.5 cents per gallon and high registration fees.

4 Vehicle combination not permitted by State size and weight regulations.

5 Maximum expenditure program with motor-fuel tax rate of 4 cents per gallon.

6 Continuation of "Current" (1960) expenditure level with motor-fuel tax rate of 3 cents per gallon.

7 No recommendation.

8 Figures in these lines not used in arriving at median values for Table 2.

the inclusion of values for Idaho and Oregon, which were not in the tax-study group. Since the tax schedules in these two States are generally on the high side, the median values are definitely higher than they would have been if the two States had not been included. The median values for the 11 States are, however, indicative of the trend of required tax payments in States that have, in recent years, given definite attention to the problem of allocating user-tax-responsibility among vehicles of different sizes and weights. The ranges in required values may be expressed briefly as follows:

	From passenger car payment of -	To tractor-semi- trailer-trailer- payment of -
Per year-----	\$41-----	\$2,214.
Per mile-----	0.44 cents--	4.43 cents.
Per ton-mile-----	0.23 cents--	0.12 cents."

FOR MONTANA COMPARABLE FIGURES FOR 1956 WOULD BE

	From passenger car Vehicle No. 1	To tractor-semi- trailer-trailer Vehicle No. 8
Per year-----	\$49-----	\$1,649
Per mile-----	0.53 cents--	3.30 cents.
Per ton-mile-----	0.27 cents--	0.09 cents.

STATE-BY-STATE COMPARISONS OF TAX STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

"The data on tax-study recommendations for the nine States for which comparable data were available are presented in tables 3, 5, and 6, the values being given respectively in terms of tax payments per year, per mile, and per ton-mile." THE LAST LINE OF EACH OF THESE THREE TABLES INCLUDES COMPUTED DATA FOR MONTANA, MAKING A 10 STATE

FIGURE 2

MEDIAN USER TAX PAYMENTS AT 1955 RATES IN ELEVEN STATES COMPARED WITH 1956 RATES IN MONTANA

(11 STATES INCLUDE 9 STATES WHICH TAX STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS ARE REPORTED IN FIGURE 1 PLUS IDAHO AND OREGON)

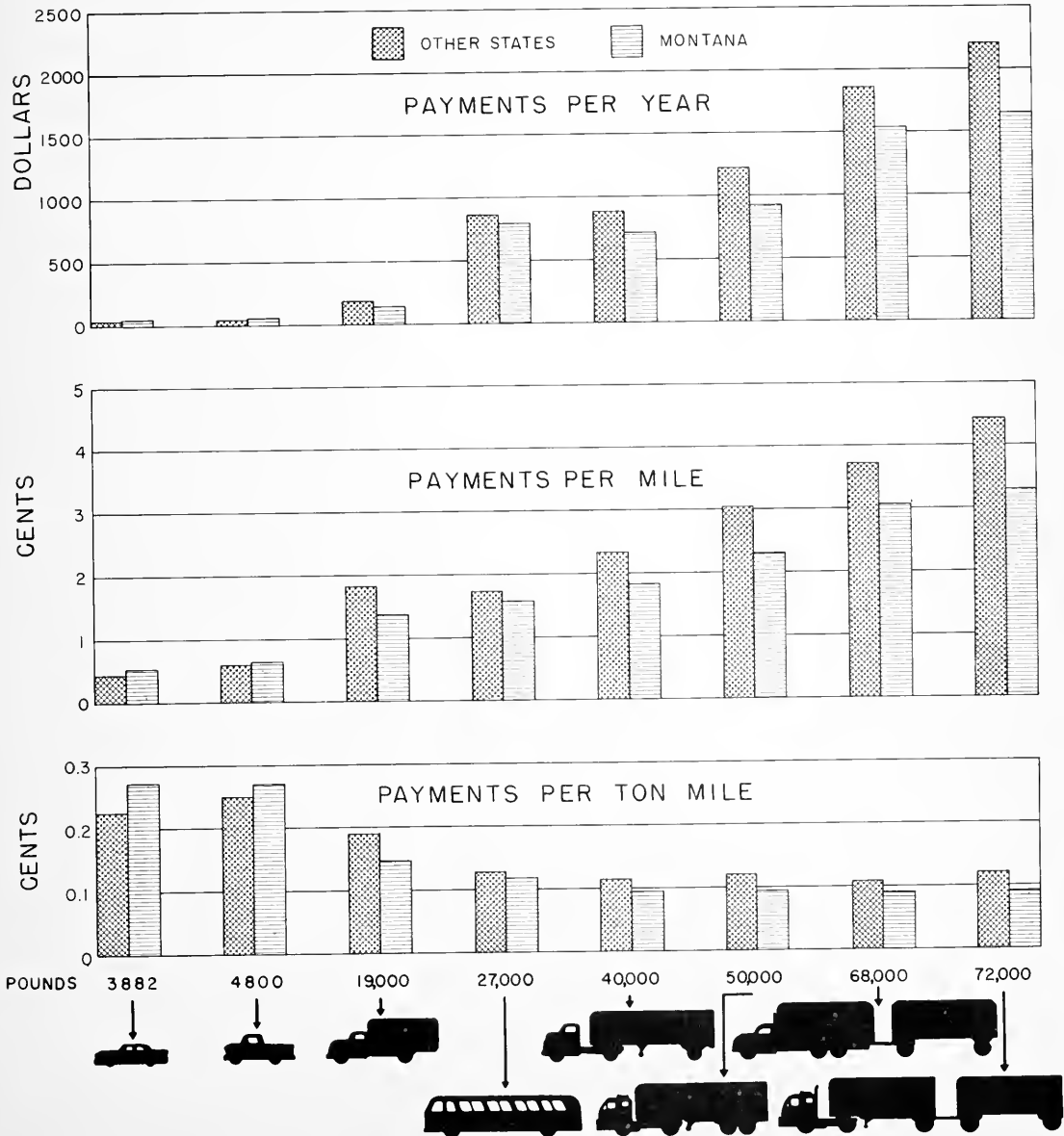
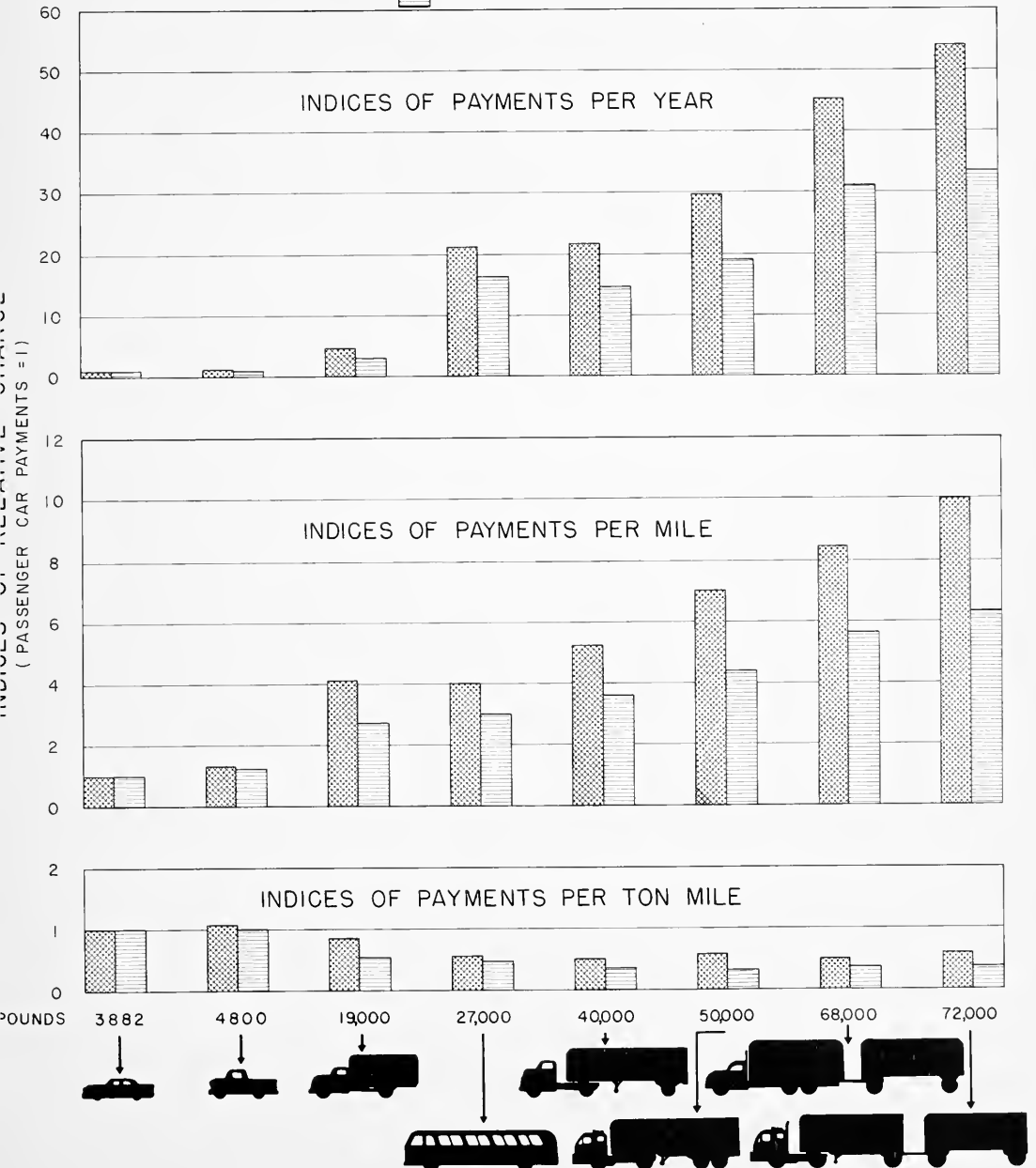


FIGURE 2-A

INDICES UNDER TAX STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS IN 11 STATES COMPARED WITH MONTANA 1956

OTHER STATES
MONTANA



PRESENTATION. "In the third column of each table there is given a series of symbols indicating for each State the type of tax study or studies on which the findings in that State were based. As indicated by the symbol "T" the majority of studies were based on the gross ton-mile concept, previously discussed. Of the two studies made in Ohio the one symbolized "S" was conducted by the standard-cost method which, as applied to motor-vehicle taxation, was^a/modified ton-mile solution.

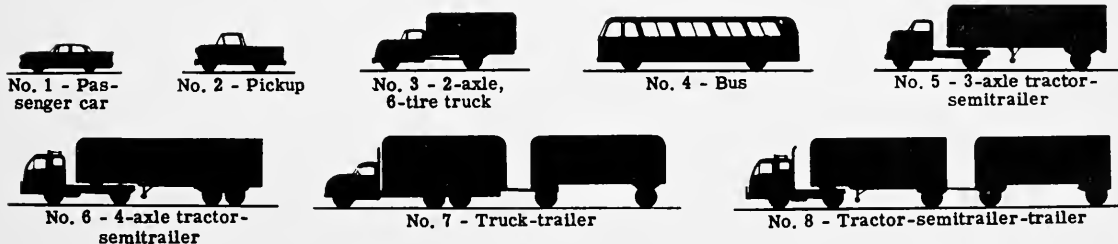
"The incremental method, denoted by the symbol "I" and used in Louisiana, Minnesota, and Ohio," AND MONTANA "is based on the concept that successive increments of highway cost are occasioned by vehicle groups of successively greater size and weight. The cost-function method, which was combined with an incremental study to produce the Louisiana findings, divides highway costs into three groups: (1) Those assignable on a per-vehicle basis, (2) those assignable on a per-mile basis, and (3) those assignable on a weight or ton-mile basis.

"It will be noted that two sets of findings are reported for Colorado and New York, as well as for Ohio. Since the investigators in both Colorado and New York offered several alternatives and expressed no decided preference for any one of them, two proposals were selected to illustrate the findings in each of those States. In the Colorado case two different assumptions were made regarding the relative magnitudes of gasoline-tax rates and registration fees. In New York two different levels of required revenue were postulated.

Table 4. - Comparison of tax-study findings for selected truck combinations indicating the range of required tax payments

Class interval of required tax payment	Number of tax studies		
	No 5: 3-axle tractor- semi- trailer	No. 6: 4-axle tractor- semi- trailer	No 8: 5-axle tractor- semi- trailer trailer
Dollars			
500-749-----	1	-----	-----
750-999-----	* 6	-----	-----
1,000-1,249-----	3	6	-----
1,250-1,499-----	-----	2	-----
1,500-1,999-----	1	* 2	4
2,000-2,999-----	2	2	* 3
3,000 and over-----	-----	1	2

* Indicates interval for Montana Studies



" A glance at each column of table 3, will disclose a wide disparity among the States in the study findings for the several selected vehicles. Similar glances along successive lines will reveal no consistent pattern of upward variation with size of vehicle. Several reasons can be definitely assigned to account for this dispersion. The principal reason, perhaps, lies in the relative magnitudes of the highway programs which the various recommended tax schedules were designed to finance. States differ in the relative extent of their highway needs, and also in the adequacy of the programs designed to meet those needs." A PERTINENT NOTE IS THAT MONTANA RATES HAVE BEEN SCALED TO A TOTAL STATE WIDE PROGRAM FOR ALL ROADS AND STREETS OVER A 20 YEAR PERIOD. "The number of motor vehicles in relation to the required revenues affects the general level of user taxation; and the composition of the vehicle population with respect to size and weight may affect the charges to the several size groups." THIS IS PARTICULARLY OF CONCERN IN MONTANA WHERE LARGE MILEAGE AND LOW PER VEHICLE MILE USAGE TENDS TO PLACE A HEAVY PER VEHICLE MILE RESPONSIBILITY ON ALL USERS.

"The study findings are naturally affected by the particular method (incremental, ton-mile, etc.) used for the assignment of tax responsibility. There is a tendency also for investigators, when converting the tax-study results into the form of a recommended schedule of tax rates, to modify, in the interest of simplicity and uniformity, the findings derived from the strict application of theory or for mulated procedure.

"In spite of the apparent shotgun scatter of study findings, some rudiments of a pattern, or at least a discernible central tendency, be-

gin to emerge when the recommended payments for a given vehicle are grouped by intervals as shown in table 4." MONTANA'S INTERVAL HAS BEEN INSERTED IN TABLE 4. IT WILL BE NOTED THAT IT IS NEVER IN THE MAXIMUM GROUP AND TENDS TOWARD THE MEDIAN GROUP.

"It will be observed that for all three truck combinations the modal class interval (the interval within and about which the findings cluster) lies in the lower part of the total range of values covered by the study findings.

"Turning to the lighter weight vehicles, we find that 6 out of 12 tax studies recommended annual passenger-car payments lying within the interval \$37.50 to \$50." THE MONTANA SCHEDULE OF \$49 IS NEAR THE TOP OF THIS INTERVAL. "In the case of the pickup truck the central tendency is weak, the recommendations being distributed rather evenly over a range extending from \$26 to \$65." MONTANA AT \$52 TENDS TOWARD THE UPPER REACHES OF THE INTERVAL. "So also with the bus, for which the findings are widely scattered over a range from \$549 to \$2,063. By contrast 7 out of 12 tax studies recommend annual payments for the 2-axle, 6-tire truck lying between \$200 and \$300." MONTANA, AT \$160, IS SOMEWHAT ON THE LOW SIDE AT THIS POINT BUT NOT GREATLY BELOW THE MEDIAN OF \$182.

"In table 5 the study findings are expressed in required user-tax payments per mile. The range of variation among the several vehicle classes is narrowed by the elimination of the mileage factor. From State To State the pattern is unchanged by this conversion, and comparisons would reveal the same central tendency.

Table 6. - Total motor-tax payments per ton-mile (in cents) for selected vehicles under tax-study recommendations

State	Year tax study pub- lished	Method 1/	Single-unit trucks								Truck combinations							
			No. 1: Passenger car		No. 2: Pickup		No. 3: 2-axle, 6-tire		No. 4: Bus		Tractor-semi-trailer				No. 7: Truck-trailer		No. 8: Tractor-semi-trailer	
											No. 5: 3-axle		No. 6: 4-axle					
			Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index	Pay- ment	Index
California-----	1946	T	0.119	1.00	0.151	1.00	0.115	0.97	0.129	0.93	0.116	0.83	0.114	0.82	0.098	0.71	0.103	0.74
Colorado-----	1950	T	.104	1.00	.256	.77	.307	1.00	.259	.85	.319	1.05	.311	1.02	.302	.77	.299	.78
Colorado-----	1950	T	.204	1.00	.255	.89	.277	1.03	.247	.86	.296	1.04	.272	1.01	.285	.79	.283	.78
Illinois-----	1946	T	.222	1.00	.266	1.20	.277	1.25	.144	.65	.173	.69	.124	.56	.087	.37	.083	.37
Louisiana-----	1955	IC	.255	1.00	.240	.94	.232	.91	.349	.58	.123	.48	.122	.48	.099	.37	(4)	----
Minnesota-----	1954	I	.204	1.00	.245	.85	.210	.76	.306	1.06	.162	.56	.103	.44	(4)	----	(4)	----
New York-----	1950	T	.260	1.00	.199	1.30	.302	1.15	.105	.72	.203	.76	.264	1.02	(4)	----	(4)	----
New York-----	1950	T	.152	1.00	.135	1.11	.112	.92	.081	.66	.080	.66	.101	.83	(4)	----	(4)	----
Ohio-----	1951	S	.211	1.00	.302	1.43	.176	.84	.166	.76	.134	.64	.115	.64	.097	.66	.128	.62
Ohio-----	1953	I	.216	1.00	.198	.92	.219	1.01	.236	.95	.111	.61	.135	.62	.117	.63	.114	.55
Utah-----	1950	T	.414	1.00	.107	1.00	.107	.91	(7)	-----	.110	.90	.116	.63	.202	.56	.101	.55
Washington-----	1948	T	.222	1.00	.167	.84	.166	.84	.145	.65	.106	.67	.106	.68	.110	.50	.098	.44
Montana-----	1956	I	.272	1.00	.270	0.99	.168	0.62	.118	0.43	.120	0.44	.158	0.58	.157	0.58	.158	0.58

1 Method used to allocate tax responsibility indicated thus: I-Incremental; IC-recommendations based on findings of incremental and cost-function solutions; S-Standard cost; T-Ton mile.

2 Motor-fuel tax rate of 8.5 cents per gallon and low registration fees.

3 Motor-fuel tax rate of 6.5 cents per gallon and high registration fees.

4 Vehicle combination not permitted by State size and weight regulations.

5 Maximum expenditure program with motor-fuel tax rate of 4 cents per gallon.

6 Continuation of "Maximum" (1947) expenditure level with motor-fuel tax rate of 3 cents per gallon.

7 No recommendation.

8 Figures in these lines not used in arriving at median values for Table 2

Table 7. - Total user-tax payments per year (in dollars) for selected vehicles at 1955 tax rates in selected States and 1956 in Montana

State	No. 1 Passenger car		Single-unit trucks						Truck combinations									
			No. 2: Pickup		No. 3: 2-axle, 6-tire		No. 4: Bus		Tractor-semitrailer				No. 7: Truck-trailer		No. 8: Tractor-semitrailer-trailer			
Payment	Index	Payment	Index	Payment	Index	Payment	Index	Payment	Index	Payment	Index	Payment	Index	Payment	Index			
California	41	1.00	53	1.29	152	3.71	734	17.90	650	15.05	806	19.66	1,232	30.05	1,230	30.00		
Colorado	39	1.00	40	1.03	164	4.31	1,668	42.77	1,211	31.05	1,529	39.21	2,505	64.23	2,827	67.36		
Idaho	51	1.00	46	.74	191	3.75	979	19.20	1,002	21.22	1,415	27.75	2,359	46.25	2,491	48.48		
Illinois	38	1.00	46	1.21	223	5.87	866	22.79	1,036	27.26	1,265	33.29	1,860	44.95	1,937	50.97		
Louisiana	42	1.00	46	1.10	190	4.52	917	21.83	834	19.86	1,007	23.98	1,440	34.29	(1)	-----		
Minnesota	51	1.00	51	1.00	154	3.02	1,748	34.27	756	14.82	986	19.33	(1)	-----	(1)	-----		
New York	37	1.00	46	1.24	182	4.92	467	12.62	881	23.81	1,220	32.97	(1)	-----	(1)	-----		
Ohio	36	1.00	62	1.63	208	5.47	865	22.76	1,057	27.42	1,467	34.61	2,632	69.26	2,542	66.19		
Oregon	43	1.00	53	1.23	216	5.02	1,187	27.60	1,306	30.33	1,765	41.05	3,050	70.93	3,225	75.00		
Utah	33	1.00	33	1.00	124	1.76	812	24.61	566	16.55	691	20.94	1,219	36.94	1,165	35.30		
Washington	43	1.00	48	1.17	150	3.85	743	14.12	675	14.46	944	23.02	1,596	38.48	1,446	35.27		
Montana	49	1.00	52	1.06	140	2.86	795	16.22	715	14.99	927	14.92	1,530	31.22	1,649	33.65		

1 Vehicle combination not permitted by State size and weight regulations

"Recommended payments per ton-mile are shown in table 6. The ton-miles used in computing this table are the products of assumed annual mileage and maximum gross weight. Had average operating weights been used instead of maximum gross weights, the payments for the heavier vehicles would have been higher and the indexes relative to the passenger-car value would generally have been nearer to unity.

"There is a general, although by no means entirely consistent, tendency for the recommended payments per ton-mile to decline as the size of vehicle increases. This trend is evidenced even in those States where a gross ton-mile solution was used. An exception occurs in the case of Colorado, where the values hover about 3 mills per ton-mile through out the range of vehicle size.

"Although size and weight as well as miles traveled are important considerations in motor-vehicle taxation, there is no scientific basis for the contention that such taxes should be made directly proportional to gross ton-miles. For example, the required thickness of a slab or beam varies as the square root of the load, rather than directly with the load itself. Numerous students of the subject have rejected the ton-mile theory and have resorted to the incremental solution, which attempts to assign tax responsibility in proportion to the costs occasioned by the traffic of vehicles of different sizes.

STATE-BY-STATE COMPARISONS OF TAX

PAYMENTS AT 1955 RATES

"Tables 7, 9, and 10 give corresponding values of actual required

Table 8.- Comparison of tax payments per year required of a 50,000-pound, 4 axle tractor-semitrailer (No. 6) under tax study recommendations and under 1955 rates in nine States and 1956 in Montana

State	Tax payments per year		Excess of tax-study recom-mendations over 1955 payments
	Tax study recom-mendations	Required tax pay-ments at 1955 rates	
California-----	\$1,135	\$ 806	\$ 329
Colorado ¹ -----	3,112		1,583
Colorado ² -----	2,921	1,529	1,392
Illinois-----	1,241	1,265	-24
Louisiana-----	1,217	1,007	210
Minnesota-----	1,833	986	847
New York ³ -----	2,639		1,419
New York ⁴ -----	1,010	1,220	-210
Ohio ⁵ -----	1,351		-116
Ohio ⁶ -----	1,353	1,467	-114
Utah-----	1,156	691	465
Washington-----	1,061	944	117
Montana-----	1,577	927	650

- 1 Motor-fuel tax rate of 8.5 cents per gallon and low registration fees.
- 2 Motor-fuel tax rate of 6.5 cents per gallon and high registration fees.
- 3 Maximum expenditure program with motor-fuel tax rate of 4 cents per gallon.
- 4 Continuation of "current" (1949) expenditure level with motor-fuel tax rate of 3 cents per gallon.
- 5 Standard-cost method used to allocate tax responsibility.
- 6 Incremental method used to allocate tax responsibility.

tax payments at 1955 rates, per year, per mile, and per ton-mile, respectively. Values for Idaho and Oregon are given in addition to those for the nine tax-study States." IN THE CASE OF MONTANA PAYMENTS AT 1956 RATES HAVE BEEN CALCULATED. THIS YEAR WAS USED SINCE 1955 RATES WERE SUPERSEDED BY A HIGHER TAX STRUCTURE FOR COMMERCIAL VEHICLES.

"The appearance and general import of these tables are not unlike what is found in the tax-study tables, 3, 5, and 6. It is of interest nonetheless to compare the actual required tax payments in 1955 with the recommendations of the several tax studies. A single example, that of the 50,000-pound, 4-axle tractor-semitrailer~ a widely used type of combination will suffice. The comparison is given in table 8 for the required tax payments per year." THE COMPARISON FOR MONTANA IS NOT ENTIRELY VALID. IT ASSUMES ONLY ONE TRAILER WOULD HAVE BEEN REGISTERED IN 1956 FOR THE ONE PULLING UNIT. ACTUALLY THE RATIO OF TRAILERS TO TRACTORS IS MORE THAN 1 TO 1. SINCE TAX STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS ARE BASED ON THE TOTAL LEVY BEING PLACED ON THE PULLING UNIT ANY NUMBER OF TRAILERS IN THE FLEET COULD BE QUALIFIED FOR USE WITH THE TRACTOR MERELY BY PAYING A \$10 LICENSE FEE.

"Quite evidently the general trend is for the tax laws enacted by the State legislatures to fall short of the tax-study recommendations. In 8 of the 12 comparisons shown the required payments are less than those recommended. In Illinois and Ohio the required payments somewhat exceed the tax-study recommendations. In New York the tax-study

Table 9. - Total user-tax payments per ton-mile (in cents) for selected vehicles at 1975 tax rates in selected States and 1976 in Montana

State	Truck combinations																	
	No. 1: Passenger car						No. 2: Pickup		No. 3: 2-axle, 6-tire		Tractor-semitrailer				No. 7: Truck-trailer		No. 8: Tractor-semitrailer-trailer	
											No. 5: 3-axle		No. 6: 4-axle					
	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index
California-----	0.441	1.00	0.663	1.50	1.530	4.95	1.560	4.11	1.711	3.80	2.015	4.57	1.666	4.59	2.650	5.58		
Colorado-----	.619	1.00	.980	1.19	1.600	4.01	1.106	7.96	1.187	7.61	1.803	9.12	1.000	11.96	5.250	12.50		
Illinois-----	.56	1.00	.680	1.00	1.010	3.49	1.750	3.57	2.027	5.70	2.530	6.46	4.710	6.61	4.902	7.09		
Indiana-----	.607	1.00	.575	1.33	2.190	5.63	1.432	6.43	2.126	6.66	1.613	6.73	6.50	6.19	3.74	6.67		
Louisiana-----	.452	1.00	.575	1.27	1.900	4.20	1.034	4.06	2.125	4.16	2.518	4.57	2.980	6.37	(1)	-----		
Michigan-----	.57	1.00	.61	1.16	1.400	2.1	1.576	6.49	1.809	6.63	2.605	6.60	(1)	-----	(1)	-----		
New York-----	.16	1.00	.57	1.46	1.30	4.57	.934	7.35	2.30	6.66	2.613	7.66	(1)	-----	(1)	-----		
Ohio-----	.639	1.00	.775	1.2	2.800	5.79	1.730	4.43	2.72	6.60	3.606	1.77	5.364	12.47	5.084	11.43		
Oregon-----	.412	1.00	.653	1.44	2.100	4.66	2.174	5.44	4.432	7.43	4.413	7.55	6.100	13.20	4.430	11.96		
Texas-----	.175	1.00	.113	1.16	1.260	3.49	1.624	4.57	1.437	4.05	1.725	4.77	2.436	4.7	2.330	6.36		
Washington-----	.661	1.00	.603	1.16	1.500	3.59	1.466	4.37	1.779	4.63	2.360	5.35	3.436	7.23	2.892	6.56		
Montana-1976-----	.7	1.00	.640	1.23	1.977	2.65	1.591	4.02	1.412	4.57	2.317	4.60	3.660	5.41	3.279	6.26		

1. Vehicle combination not permitted by State size and weight regulations.

Table 10. - Total user-tax payments per ton-mile (in cents) for selected vehicles at 1975 tax rates in selected States and 1976 in Montana

State	Truck combinations															
	Single-unit trucks						Truck combinations									
	No. 1: Passenger cars		No. 2: Pickup		No. 3: 2-Axle, 6-tire		No. 4: Bus		Tractor-semitrailer				No. 7: Truck-trailer		No. 8: Tractor-semitrailer-trailer	
	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index	Pay ment	Index
California	0.227	1.00	0.276	1.22	0.160	0.70	0.109	0.48	0.086	0.38	0.061	0.36	0.072	0.32	0.566	0.30
Colorado	.216	1.00	.208	.98	.177	.82	.257	1.14	.159	.74	.153	.71	.147	.68	.140	.61
Idaho	.202	1.00	.250	.89	.201	.71	.185	.51	.142	.50	.119	.49	.139	.49	.138	.49
Illinois	.211	1.00	.240	1.14	.235	1.11	.128	.61	.139	.64	.127	.60	.109	.52	.108	.51
Louisiana	.239	1.00	.240	1.03	.200	.86	.136	.50	.113	.47	.101	.43	.085	.36	(1)	----
Michigan	.212	1.00	.266	.94	.182	.57	.253	.90	.099	.35	.099	.35	(1)	----	(1)	----
New York	.205	1.00	.260	1.17	.192	.94	.069	.34	.116	.57	.122	.60	(1)	----	(1)	----
Ohio	.214	1.00	.323	1.53	.219	1.04	.128	.61	.139	.66	.147	.70	.155	.73	.141	.67
Oregon	.234	1.00	.276	1.16	.227	.95	.176	.74	.172	.72	.177	.74	.179	.75	.179	.75
Utah	.183	1.00	.172	.94	.131	.72	.120	.66	.072	.39	.069	.38	.072	.39	.069	.38
Washington	.227	1.00	.250	1.10	.166	.73	.110	.48	.089	.39	.094	.41	.094	.41	.080	.45
Montana-1976	.272	1.00	.270	0.99	.147	0.54	.118	0.43	.094	0.35	.093	0.34	.090	0.33	.092	0.34

1. Vehicle combination not permitted by State size and weight regulations.

Table 11. - Total annual charges, per vehicle mile charges and ton mile charges in Montana under proposed schedule and under rates in effect in 1969

Fees Proposed under Incremental Study

Vehicle	Weight		Annual Fees	Fees per colton	Annual fuel (cents.)	Fuel Tax at 7¢ gal.	Re-insur- ation fee	Other flat fees 1/	Total annual charge	mileage charge	ton mile charge
	Tons	Pounds									
1	1.94	3,882	5,300	16.7	557	30.00	10		48.00	0.5260	0.2715
2	2.60	4,160	8,000	15.4	513	35.00	10	4.00	51.01	0.4800	0.2704
3	3.50	10,000	10,000	7.0	1,302	80.00	10		155.70	1.4074	0.1601
4	13.50	27,000	60,000	5.3	6,634	660.00	10		126.00	1.5000	0.1178
5	20.00	40,000	30,000	4.0	7,017	560.00	10		350.00	1.6110	0.1203
6	25.00	50,000	40,000	4.2	6,824	660.00	20		1,470.00	1.6117	0.1500
7	36.00	68,000	60,000	3.5	14,206	1,000.00	10		1,600.00	2.6602	0.1555
8	36.00	72,000	60,000	3.4	14,705	1,000.00	30		1,800.00	2.6305	0.1577

1/ Flat Fee schedule used: Mileage rates would provide somewhat similar rates.

1969 Fees

1	1.94	3,882	5,300	16.7	557	30.00	10				48.00	0.5260	0.2715
2	2.60	4,160	8,000	15.4	513	35.00	10			4.00	51.01	0.4800	0.2704
3	3.50	15,000	10,000	7.0	1,302	80.00	10				155.70	1.4074	0.1601
4	13.50	27,000	60,000	5.3	6,634	660.00	10				126.00	1.5000	0.1178
5	20.00	40,000	30,000	4.0	7,017	560.00	10				350.00	1.6110	0.1203
6	25.00	50,000	40,000	4.2	6,824	660.00	20				200.00	1.6117	0.1500
7	36.00	68,000	60,000	3.5	14,206	1,000.00	20				910.00	1.5302	0.0900
8	36.00	72,000	60,000	3.4	14,705	1,000.00	20				600.00	1.6405	0.0916

findings based on continuation of the current expenditure level are lower than the required tax payments at 1955 rates; but the findings based on highway needs (the "maximum expenditure program") are much greater than the actual required payments. The Louisiana report was released only recently and there has been insufficient time for the legislature to deal with its recommendations. In Minnesota no legislative action had been taken subsequent to the tax-study findings.

"State-by-State comparisons of required tax payments per mile are set forth in table 9. The comparisons on a ton-mile basis are given in table 10. The downward trend in payments per ton-mile is notable. There is, however, a tendency, in States where weight-distance or similar taxes have been enacted, for the rates per ton-mile on truck combinations to hold steady, or even to increase slightly with increasing size. This trend may be observed in the amounts for Colorado, Idaho, New York, Ohio, and Oregon.

SUMMARY

"The results of this brief review of State tax-study recommendations regarding the rates of user-tax payments by vehicles of different sizes and weights are summarized in the following numbered paragraphs:

1. "Median values of tax-study findings range from \$40 per year for a light passenger car to \$1,836 per year for a 5-axle tractor semi-trailer-trailer combination; and from 0.43 to 3.67 cents per mile of travel." TAX STUDY FINDINGS FOR MONTANA FALL NEAR THE MEDIAN EVEN THOUGH PER VEHICLE MILE COSTS MUST OBVIOUSLY BE RELATIVELY HIGH IN THIS STATE. THE MONTANA RATES DO NOT GO TO EXTREMES, THEY ARE NEVER

BELOW THE MINIMUM NOR ABOVE THE MAXIMUM OF THE 10 STATES STUDIED.

2. "With respect to the rate of recommended tax payments per gross ton-mile, the trend of median tax-study values is downward. The variation among the vehicles selected for study extends from 2.2 mills per ton-mile for the light passenger car to 1.2 mills for the 4-axle tractor-semitrailer and 1.0 mill for the 5-axle tractor-semi-trailer-trailer." MONTANA FOLLOWS THE DOWNWARD TREND IN TON-MILE CHARGES BUT THERE IS A TENDENCY TO FLATTEN OUT AT THE UPPER THREE WEIGHT GROUPS FOR CURRENT AND RECOMMENDED TAX STRUCTURES.

3. "There is a wide variation from State to State in the recommended user-tax payments for each of the eight vehicles selected for comparison. In spite of this dispersion there is a marked central tendency, particularly among the heavy vehicle combinations, in that the study findings tend to group within relatively narrow intervals. Thus, for the 3-axle tractor-semitrailer, 5 out of 12 studies recommended annual tax payments within the range \$750 to \$1,000. In 6 out of 12 studies the recommended payment for the 4-axle tractor-semi-trailer lies between \$1,000 and \$1,250 per year. For the largest combination in the group, the 5-axle tractor-semitrailer-trailer, 4 out of 8 studies recommended annual tax payments lying between \$1,500 and \$2,000." THE POSITION OF MONTANA VEHICLES IN THIS ARRAY IS INDICATED BY FOOTNOTE ON TABLE 4.

4. " Comparison of the tax-study findings with the payments required under 1955 tax rates reveals a general tendency (with exceptions) for the tax laws enacted by State legislatures to fall short

of tax-study recommendations in the payments required of heavy motor vehicles and combinations. For example, 8 out of 12 tax-study findings recommended greater user-tax payments for the 4-axle tractor-semitrailer than were imposed under the corresponding 1955 tax laws in the nine States in which the Studies were made."

FIGURE 3 SHOWS A SIGNIFICANT COMPARISON OF MEDIAN 1955 USER RATES IN EFFECT IN THE 11 STATES STUDIED WITH RATES PROPOSED UNDER MONTANA'S FACT FINDING COMMITTEE STUDY. THE COMPARISON BY INDICES RATHER THAN ACTUAL VALUES IS DESIRABLE BECAUSE OF THE RELATIVELY HIGH USER CHARGES DEMANDED OF PASSENGER CARS IN MONTANA. COMPARISON OF MONTANA'S 1956 CHARGES WITH MEDIAN CHARGES IN THE OTHER 11 STATES (SEE FIGURES 2 AND 2A) INDICATES MONTANA IS RELATIVELY LOW IN ALL WEIGHT BRACKETS EXCEPT THE PASSENGER CAR AND PERHAPS THE LIGHTEST TRUCK. FIGURE 3 INDICATES HOW NEARLY THE MONTANA TAX STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS WOULD REMEDY THIS BY BRINGING MONTANA CLOSE TO THE MEDIAN.

FIGURE 3

INDICES UNDER TAX PAYMENTS AT 1955 RATES IN ELEVEN STATES COMPARED WITH MONTANA STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

